

WELCOME MESSAGE FROM THE CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

As we start a new semester, the doors open for new opportunities to enrich teaching and learning, take risks, and innovate; all with a common mission to engage, motivate, and guide our students through their life-long learning paths. The Center for Teaching and Learning and Educational Technology teams are eager to support and partner with faculty and staff to accomplish this mission. CTL is working on many professional development opportunities for this semester, and invites everyone to take advantage of them: Mindful Conversations, Hostos Teaching Institute, Hostos Reads, colloquiums, Teaching Day, Bronx EdTech Showcase, and CTL Spa Day. It is a privilege for Cynthia and I to serve as Co-Directors of the Center, and we look forward to working with you to build a very successful Spring 2018 semester.

Love in the Classroom-for my students

Afternoon. Across the garden, in Green Hall,
someone begins playing the old piano -
a spontaneous piece, amateurish and alive,
full of a simple, joyful melody.
The music floats among us in the classroom.

I stand in front of my students
telling them about sentence fragments.
I ask them to find the ten fragments
in the twenty-one-sentence paragraph on
page forty-five.
They've come from all parts
of the world-Iran, Micronesia, Africa,
Japan, China, even Los Angeles-and
they're still
eager to please me. It's less than half
way through the quarter.

They bend over their books and begin.
Hamid's lips move as he follows
the tortuous labyrinth of English syntax.
Yoshie sits erect, perfect in her pale make-up,
legs crossed, quick pulse minutely
jerking her right foot. Tony,
from an island in the South Pacific, sprawls
limp and relaxed in his desk.

The melody floats around and through us
in the room, broken here and there,
fragmented,

re-started. It feels Mideastern, but
it could be jazz, or the blues-it could be
anything from anywhere.
I sit down on my desk to wait,
and it hits me from nowhere-a sudden,
sweet, almost painful love for my students.

"Nevermind," I want to cry out.
"It doesn't matter about fragments.
Finding them or not. Everything's
a fragment and everything's not a fragment. Listen to
the music, how fragmented,
how whole, how we can't separate the music from the
sun falling on its knees on all the greenness,

from this moment, how this moment
contains all the fragments of yesterday
and everything we'll ever know of
tomorrow!"

Instead, I keep a coward's silence.
The music stops abruptly;
they finish their work,
and we go through the right answers,
which is to say
we separate the fragments from the whole.

Author - Al Zolynas

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